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Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 00220 221127Z

11/15
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAM-01 SSM-03 OMB-01 CU-02 /075 W
---------- 079505
R 171418Z FEB 76
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7723
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y LAST THREE LINES OF PARA 1

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PINS, IS, JO
SUBJ: WEST BANK DEMONSTRATIONS PROTEST RULING RE JEW PRAYING ON HARAM (TEMMPLE MOUNT)

REF: JERUSALEM 212

1. SUMMARY: RIOTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS WERE REPORTED IN NEARLY ALL WEST BANK TOWNS OVER WEEKEND IN PROTEST OF RECENT RULING BY ISRAELI MAGISTRATE THAT JEWS HAVE RIGHT TO PRAY ON HARAM ES-SHARIF (TEMPLE MOUNT). DEMONSTRATORS REPORTEDLY ERECTED BARRICADES, SET FIRES AND CLASHED WITH ISRAELI SECURITY FORCES WHILE STUDENTS IN NUMEROUS HIGH SCHOOLS STAGED SIT-DOWN STRIKES. ISRAELI AUTHORITIES BEEFED UP SECURITY FORCES AND RESTRICTED TRAVEL OVER JORDAN BRIDGES BY CITIZENS OF NABLUS, RAMALLAH, JENIN, AL-BIREH, AND TULKARM. BY SUNDAY, FEB 15, CALM WAS
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PAGE 02 JERUSA 00220 221127Z

RESTORED, BUT JEWS ATTEMPTED TO ORGANIZE PRAYER SERVICE ON

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

TARAM FEB 16. END SUMMARY.

1. VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST RECENT COURT RULING THAT JEWS HAVE RIGHT TO PRAY ON HARAM ES-SHARIF SUBSIDED IN JERUSALEM OVER WEEKEND, BUT MANY OTHER WEST BANK TOWN WITNESSED PROTESTS. GROUP OF JEWS TRIED TO ORGANIZE "MINYAN" (10-MAN PRAYER GROUP) IN HARAM AREA EARLY AFTERNOON FEB 16 BUT DEPARTED PEACEFULLY WHEN HARAM AUTHORITIES AND POLICE ASKED THEM TO DESIST AND USHERED THEM OUT. RABBI IN GROUP TOLD VOA CORRESPONDENT THAT THIS WAS FIRST ATTEMPT TO PUT RECENT COURT RULING INTO EFFECT BUT DID NOT SAY WHETHER FURTHER ATTEMPTS PLANNED.

2. SLOGANS CONDEMNING THE OCCUPATION AND AFFIRMING ARAB CHARACTER OF JERUSALEM APPEARED ON WALLS OF OLD CITY OVER WEEKEND. ALTHOUGH SOUKS WERE CALM AFTER FRIDAY'S MAJOR CLASH BETWEEN POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS, SECURITY FORCES MAINTAINED A STRONG PRESENCE AND MOST ARAB SHOOLS WERE CLOSED.

3. IN NABLUS, BARRICADES, FIRES AND CLASHES BETWEEN STONE-THROWING DEMONSTRATORS AND SECURITY FORCES WERE REPORTED IN LOCAL ARAB PRESS AND JERUSALEM POST. AL QUDS REPORTS THAT NO LESS THAN 2,000 ISRAELI SOLDIERS, LARGEST NUMBER SINCE BEGINNING OF OCCUP-TION, WERE STATIONED IN NABLUS OVER WEEKEND. STUDENTS, ONE OF WHOM CARRIED PALESTINIAN FLAG, CLASHED WITH SECURITY FORCES AT SEVERAL HIGH SCHOOLS. AS OF SUNDAY, AL QUDS ESTIMATED 100 ARRESTED IN NABLUS AND REPORTED FINES OF 1,000 TO 1,700. GENERAL STRIKE WAS GAUGED TO BE 50 PERCENT EFFECTIVE. CONGEN OBSERVER IN NABLUS FEB 16 FOUND CITY OUTWARDLY CALM AND STORES OPEN, BUT SECURITY PATROLS MUCH IN EVIDENCE.

4. IN JERICHO, PRESS REPORTS ARRESTS OF STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING IN THEIR CLASSROOMS FEB 14 LED TO CLOSING OF MANY SHOPS. ISRAELI AUTHORITIES REPORTEDLY IMPOSED TWO-HOUR CURFEW. CONGEN OBSERVED ISRAELI AUTHORITIES FORCIBLY OPENING SOME ESTABLISHMENTS.

5. IN RAMALLAH, CONGEN SOURCE REPORTS BLOCKED ROADS, ARRESTS AND CLOSED SCHOOLS. SEVERAL SOURCES ALSO CONFIRM AL QUDS REPORT THAT MAYOR KARIM KHALAF WAS QUESTIONED BY ISRAELI AUTHORI-TIES FOR SEVERAL HOURS AFTER REFUSING TO EVICT 150 DEMON-
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PAGE 03 JERUSA 00220 221127Z

STRATORS FROM THE CITY HALL. SCHOOL SIT-DOWNS AND CLOSING OF STORES ALSO REPORTED IN AL-BIREH FEB 14.

6. IN JENIN, CLASSES WERE STOPPED AND SIT-DOWN STRIKES CON-TINUED INTO SUNDAY, ACCORDING TO AL QUDS. PAPER ALSO REPORTS DISCOVERY AND DISARMING OF BOMBS IN TWO OF THE TOWN'S HIGH SCHOL SCHOOLS.

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7. A NUMBER OF STUDENTS STAGED DEMONSTRATION AT BETHLEHEM MAYOR'S OFFICE FEB 16 ACCORDING TO AL QUDS. FIFTY STUDENTS WERE REPORTEDLY ARRESTED FROM THEIR CLASSROOMS AND 44 WERE TRIED BY MILITARY COURT MONDAY NIGHT.

8. BEIT SAHUR, STUDENTS ALSO DEMONSTRATED IN CLASSROOMS AND PRRESENTED PETITION PROTESTING RECENT COURT DECISION, CLOSING OF SCHOOLS, US SECURITY COUNCIL VETO, IMPRISONMENT OF ARCHIB-ISHOP CAPUCCI, ARRESTS AND TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS.

9. IN RETALIATION FOR VARIOUS ACTS OF PROTEST, ISRAELI MILGOVT ANNOUNCED THAT CITIZENS OF NABLUS, RAMALLAH, AL-BIREH, JENIN AND TULKARM WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED CROSS JORDAN BRIDGES TO EAST BANK, NOR WOULD PERMITS BE GRANTED FOR RELATIVES TO VISIT FAMILIES IN THOSE TOWNS. DESPITE INDICATION IN JERUSALEM POST THAT TRAVEL RESTRICTION WOULD BE LIFTED AFTER CALM RESTORED, EAST JERUSALEM SOURCESREPORT IT STILL IN EFFECT AS OF NOON FEB 17.
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Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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